1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

Funerary rites.—Death may result from the abduction of the soul by some spirit or by the ghost of a relative. 761

The ghost-soul loves and pities the living whom it has deserted, but the latter fear and abhor the ghost-soul. [Henry, 1941, p. 67.]

Not long ago the *Aweikoma-Caingang* cremated the dead and later collected and buried the bones, along with part of the deceased's property. After a cremation, they extinguished their fires and drilled fire anew. The soul of the deceased loomed as a peril especially to the surviving spouse, who went into retreat, abstained from eating meat, and underwent lustration. To terminate mourning, the mourner's hair and fingernails were clipped, pounded up, and thrown into the water. Then followed a beer festival, accompanied by dances and songs, during which the widow drank beer from a bamboo tube. Keening was not confined to the period of death, but occurred throughout the following year whenever relatives recalled their bereavement. 764 765

The *Caingang* now inter their dead with knees drawn up. Chants are sung around the body during and after its transportation to the grave. One cemetery had two central tumuli, 10 to 20 feet by 18 to 25 feet (3 to 6 m. by 5.5 to 7.5 m.) surrounded by vertically walled ditches. The same tumuli have been reported for the 18th-century *Guayaná*, ancestors of the *Caingang*[4] (fig. 60). The corpse, with funeral deposit, is put in a deep chamber, roofed with palm fronds and earth. The villagers at once desert the settlement and hastily construct new dwellings in the woods. For 3 days they eat only palm shoots (palmitos) and maize boiled by throwing heated potsherds in the water. They destroy part of the deceased's property and impose a strict taboo on his name. 764 768

The grave is periodically visited to renew the mound and to hold a memorial service with lamentations, dancing, chanting, and drinking. For several years, at dawn and dusk the relatives of a dead person utter funeral laments. 765

In days of old if a person died far away from his village, his companions interred his body on the spot but kept his head in a pot. On returning home they celebrated a funeral ceremony and buried the head in the communal cemetery (Horta Barboza, 1913, pp. 29–30). 766

Life after death.—Before the burial, the shaman, as he rattles his gourd by the corpse, warns the soul about the lurking dangers in the other world. He tells it that it will arrive at two paths, one leading to the cobweb of a gigantic spider and the other to a trap which will 775 764

[4] See Lozano (1873–74, 1: 423): "forman un género de cementerio, que conservan muy limpio; y en él abren sus sepulturas, y en enterrando á alguno, ponen sobre cada una un montón de tierra en figura piramidal, en cuyo remate sientan un medio calabaza, y al pié conservan de continuo un fuego lento que van a cebar todos los dias con leña muy tenue, sus mas cercanos parientes. El calabaza, dicen, es para que no falte al difunto con que beber, si le afligiere la sed; y el fuego para que ahuyente las moscas." On the funerary mounds, see also Serrano (1929, pp. 15–16).

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precipitate it into a boiling pot. He also describes the slippery path from which it may fall into a swamp, where a huge crab awaits it (Nimuendajú, 1914, p. 372). 764 775

But at last the soul arrives at an underworld in the west, where it is day during our night, and where the forests teem with tapirs, deer, and other game. The souls of the aged become young again and live for the span of a human life. After a second death, the soul turns into a small insect, generally a mosquito or an ant, whose death ends everything; for this reason the *Caingang* never kill these insects (Baldus, 1937 c, p. 49).

WARFARE

A man who has been offended by some member of the community stands in front of his hut and in a loud voice enumerates all his grievances, sometimes bursting into a chant. He ends with threats against his enemy who, in the meantime, behaves in the same manner on the other side of the camp. After reciprocal abuses that often last a whole night, the challenger, followed by a group of supporters, advances toward the offender, who is immediately assisted by his own partisans. Both factions, armed with wooden clubs, fight a pitched battle, but are careful not to kill anybody. The sham battles of the *Caingang* have been described by many observers and may well be formalized brawls which have been interpreted as sportive games. 578 627

Feuds between *Caingang* groups may develop into regular warfare. When one group engages another, the members of the Kadnyerú moity subdivision always form the first line. The Kamé constitute the second line and enter the fight as a reserve to take the place of the exhausted Kadnyerú. Battles between related groups are always preceded by exchanges of insults and by other demonstrations of anger. Although no weapons but cudgels are used, blows are so lustily administered that many are seriously wounded or killed. 628 726 [616] [411]

Wars against foreign tribes or the Whites were less strictly patternised. The *Caingang*, like all Indians, relied mainly on surprise attacks carried on at dawn. After a general discharge of arrows, the warriors, armed with their clubs, rushed against the enemy (Horta Barbosa, 1913, p. 42). 726 648

Women and children were generally spared and were adopted by the victorious group. They cut off the heads of slain enemies but did not keep them as trophies. 727

ETIQUETTE

When a *Caingang* visits another village, he hides in the vicinity until able to announce his presence to some relative. The host receives him with his face covered with a cloth and does not look at his guest until 574 576

763 Ndíli handed her some medicine, a pounded
75 herb mixed with water, and she tried to force that between the child's lips; but it only trickled down its chin. Some of the women sought to help her by heating their hands over the fire and laying them on the baby.

763 When it seemed that the child must surely die, Waipó left camp to call the others of our hunting party, for when the ghost-souls are about they may take away the living; and the Kaingáng feel the need for each other's protection and "live piled up."

When I climbed into my hammock that night, there had been a lull in the weeping, but I was awakened several hours before dawn by the frantic keening of Waikomé. One by one, others joined her, and I knew then that the baby was dead. As I watched, the emotion gradually grew more intense; and some went to join the group mourning around the child. There was no play-acting here, no singling out of those whom relationship obliged to weep from those who could just look on. Those who were not affected kept aloof and performed their daily tasks, but those who felt an identification with the bereaved parents mourned with them. Ndíli's second cousin sat with his arm around him and wept, but Ndíli's brother seemed entirely untouched and soon went off to get honey. At last, late in the morning, the parents took up their little bundle and went away, and the sound of their keening came back to us through the forest.

795 That day no one went hunting even though there was no meat in camp.
768 Toward noon Waipó said to me, his voice intense with fear: "You'd better pack your things, because we're going away from here right away. We thought we would stay and kill another tapir, but the baby died; and now we have to move." Who knows what might have happened if they had remained? The ghost-soul of the baby might have taken someone along with it or the ghost-soul which had killed it might kill again. It really does the Kaingáng no good to flee from the ghost-soul, for although it has a tendency to lurk about the place where the bones of its dead body are buried, it also is nomadic like the Kaingáng and may dog their footsteps wherever they go.

763 If we think of death among ourselves and the demonstrations that
152 accompany it among the less inhibited members of our own society; if we disregard for a moment the wild surroundings, the rhythmic keening, the fear of the ghost-soul, and even, perhaps, the useless medicine that was forced between the choking child's lips (although, Heaven knows, that too might be easily duplicated in our society), we cannot but see a striking resemblance between the grief of Waikomé and Ndíli and the members of their group and similar displays in our own society. Among ourselves, anger is generally thrust into the background and often disappears entirely when grief is sincere, but among the Kaingáng it pervades the entire scene and manifests itself in an irritability that may easily become anger. It is

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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difficult to talk to many of the Kaingáng on these occasions because they are so easily enraged, and the ethnologist had best hold his tongue and try to appear as small as possible. In death the Kaingáng feel a threat to their security. As they put it, "We are afraid of the ghost-souls; so we come together and live piled up." As in the feuds, no one knows when the deaths will cease. The presence of death lays bare the very fiber of the Kaingáng personality, for it is in terms of this emotional amalgam in which anger and fear are indistinguishably fused that we must understand all of their behavior in times of stress.

In 1918 when the first wave of the grippe struck the Kaingáng, killing them in such numbers that their bodies lay about unburied until the dogs ate them, Thunder Storm rose up in his rage and fear and beat the air and trees with a club. "When disease came," said his son to me, "my father beat the trees because he was afraid of the supernatural beings (*nggĩyúdn*). He said, 'If I see you, I'll kill you. You are *waikayú*[1] and kill us all the time. So if I see you come to me, I'll kill you! The Brazilians kill my relatives; so out of revenge I destroy them when I see them! When I see them, I kill them, and I'll do the same to you—when I see you, I'll kill you!' He spoke thus as he beat the trees." Nothing could express this side of the Kaingáng character and world-view better. Here is condensed the Kaingáng frantic fear and anger at the forces of death, the equation of the supernatural with any other enemy, and the identification of the situation created by death with the vendetta tradition and revenge.

The Kaingáng not only fight with death; they also fly from it. That is why Waipó told me that we must move on when Ndĩli's baby died, and that is why old Kakthí moved out of her house when the grippe descended again in 1933. "Why has she left her house?" said I to her son-in-law. "She is afraid of our sickness. She said, 'If I stay there, I'll get sick'; so she went away. She is in the forest to get away from it. She went to another place so our sickness would not see her." Poor Kakthí fled in vain, for she soon fell ill and died. "Her [dead] husband called her, and that is why she died. Our ghost-souls led her off, and that is why she died. Her husband's ghost-soul led her away, and that is why she died. She lay there telling about it, and then she died. The supernatural beings and her husband's soul led her away. He [her husband] led her away so that he might go with her."

The ghost-soul loves and pities the living whom it has deserted, but the latter fear and abhor the ghost-soul. The ghost-soul longs for those it has left behind, but they remain cold to its longing. "One pities one's children and therefore goes with them [i.e. takes them] when one dies. One loves [literally, lives in] one's children, and dies and goes with one's children, and one [i.e. the child] dies." The dead pity those they have left alone with

[1] Vicious, aggressive.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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no one to care for them. They have left behind parts of themselves, for their children are those "in whom they live." But to the pity, love, and longing of the ghost-soul, the children return a cry of "Mother, leave me and go!" as she lies on the funeral pyre. The Kaingáng oscillate between a feeling of attachment for the dead and a desire never to see them again. Over and over again, their keening formulae repeat, "I desire to see my people," but the fear of seeing them is so great that some deny that they ever even dream of the dead. "I do not wish to get sick; that is why I never see my dead relatives," said Klendó.

The longing of the ghost-soul and its promise of good hunting is no more of an inducement to the Kaingáng to forsake this world than the glories of Paradise are to us. "A year[2] after my father died," said Vomblé, "I saw his soul. My brother was about to die, and probably my father came to call him. My father was about to talk to me. He said, 'I come to call you.' 'I don't want to go with you. My children are not here.' [Kulá, his wife, was away with her father.] 'But come with me to see my place. Leave your children and come with me.' 'No! Go! I won't go with you. Your ghost-soul went. I am not a ghost-soul. When you died, your ghost-soul went away and your children suffered. So I won't leave my children. If I die, all my children will go with me. But you left your children and things and went. I'll go to see your place and then come back, but I won't go with you. You live in a bad land. Your soul eats slugs that live in dead wood. My land is good. Women and game are plentiful. I will die when I am old. As I am now, I will not die. When I am old and weak, I will die.' When the others heard me talking, they shook me and told me why I was talking." This story expresses other things besides Vomblé's desire to live and his resentment against his father's ghost-soul. While Vomblé does not wish to be his father's companion in the other world, he declares that when he himself dies, he will take his children with him so that they will not suffer through his absence. The feeling of resentment at having been deserted by the dead runs through these accounts of experiences with the ghost-soul and integrates with the Kaingáng attitude toward social obligations.

There is another way in which Kaingáng life expresses itself in the emotional and imaginative streams that are loosed at death. The dead pass out of the embraces of the living, they are shut out of their lives in precisely the same way as members of other extended families; and they constantly threaten them with death. Their status is veritably that of "different things." When a man's ghost-soul came to call his sister, saying, "I have come to call you and your husband," she became angry with him and replied, "No! You are a different thing, and yet you come to me. They

[2] Literally—"one period of no pine nuts."

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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killed you. When they killed you, I wandered around suffering, but you 768
come to call me!" When the ghost-soul at last went away, she was "all 775
green. She stood there without saying anything. He [her husband] said to her, 'Why are you green?' But she said nothing. She sat down holding on to a post. Then he asked if she was sick—if she had a pain in the belly. But she did not talk. Wanenggló [her husband] asked her whether she had seen a ghost-soul. Probably she saw a ghost-soul. But she did not say anything." Like vendetta enemies, the ghost-souls are "other things"—it is the only category the Kaingáng have for those who dwell outside the limits of the extended families—and for people in this category they know only one emotion, fear-anger.

When the Kaingáng are drunk, their malevolent and fearsome impulses 152
rise to the surface, and the memory of death plays its part in this. Festa 579
time, when the beer troughs are brimming with the steaming, sourish, honey beer, is a special occasion for remembering the dead. It is also the occasion when recollections of adultery unpunished or of slights unrequited surge into consciousness. While some dance, sing, or brawl, others sit around the edge of the dance circle with their heads in their hands and tears streaming down their faces, and their sobs and high rhythmic keening mingle with the noise of quarreling and disordered singing. When they have done with their hour or so of weeping, they rise and fill their baskets or gourds with beer and join in the festa. No recollection of the dead can occur without unleashing fear, and fear cannot be liberated without the eruption of anger, so the memory of the dead only adds to the disruptive forces that are set in motion by the beer. The more one knows about the Kaingáng, the more one is struck by the extent to which the very roots of their being have been undermined and torn by impulses to violence. This is all the more amazing when we remember what affectionate people they seem to be—how much they love to multiply a hundredfold all kinds of personal attachments. Nevertheless, when drunkenness uncovers the Kaingáng personality, it does not bubble over in rivulets of tenderness, but pours out in torrents of violence. The only outlet is murder, and that is why festas, if not actually the scene of murders, used to be almost always the forerunners of raids on the Brazilians or on vendetta enemies. The Kaingáng themselves understand, in a way, what the festa meant to them, for they say, "We had festas in order to go to attack the Braziliana." Of course not every festa is characterized by violence, but many are.[9]

[9] Although the Kaingáng held an old-time beer festa at my request the aboriginal beer troughs have been superseded by jugs of sugar cane whiskey, and the tumultuous singing by the music of an accordion played by a white man. These changes, however, have not curbed the essential temper of the Indians, and fights still occur at festas. 534 293 177